

WASHINGTON. D.C. –House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) today criticized the proposed Pelosi-Obey \$825 billion economic “stimulus” package characterizing it as an \$825 billion earmark that will do little but expand the federal government at the expense of prolonging the current economic recession. More than 40 percent of spending in the proposed bill is for expanding current programs or creating new ones.

“The so-called ‘American Recovery and Reinvestment Act’ amounts to nothing more than an \$825 billion earmark designed to expand government on the backs of the American taxpayers using money we do not have,” Rep. Issa said. “There is no guarantee of any short-term gain, but there is no question of the irreparable harm we can expect by saddling our children and grandchildren with trillions of dollars of debt.”

According to a report released by the Congressional Budget Office, only **seven percent** of the \$355 billion in discretionary spending included in the bill would be injected into the economy by the end of FY09. More than \$200 billion of “stimulus” funds will be spent between FY2010 and FY 2019 – long after the recession is projected to be over. Section 1105 of the bill stipulates that funding that isn’t spent after two years can be “re-obligated” for other activities without Congressional approval, oversight or promise of public benefit.

"Using the guise of an economic crisis as a front to expand existing government programs and create a bureaucratic slush fund is disturbing and completely unacceptable given the severity of our current economic crisis," Rep. Issa said. "The argument that this bill is urgently needed to reinvigorate our economy has no credibility when you consider that 93 percent of the bill's discretionary spending will be spent in years to come. It amounts to nothing more than a blank check for bureaucrats."

Furthermore, while billed as a transportation and infrastructure investment, a closer look at the Pelosi-Obey stimulus bill shows that only **three percent** of the \$825 billion will go toward road and highway construction.

"Democrats should be honest with the American people about how they intend to spend taxpayer dollars," Rep. Issa added. "By the end of 2010, only 12 percent of the funds set aside for highway construction will be spent. What kind of job creation can we expect where the majority of funds set aside for public infrastructure aren't spent for another two years? The only road being paved in this bill is the road to financial ruin."